

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for facilitating the management of a web site, comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

scanning the web site to generate a first data structure which represents the web site at a first point in time;

subsequently, after changes have been made to the web site, scanning the web site to generate a second data structure which represents the web site at a second point in time;

comparing the first data structure to the second data structure to identify modifications that were made to the web site between the first and the second points in time; and

presenting the modifications to a user.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of presenting the modifications to a user comprises generating and displaying a graphical map in which at least some of the modifications are highlighted.

3. The method of Claim 2, wherein generating and displaying the graphical map comprises displaying at least one of the following types of objects in a distinct color: new nodes, new links, modified nodes, deleted nodes, and deleted links.

4. The method of Claim 2, wherein generating and displaying the graphical map comprises presenting a user an option to specify types of modifications to be displayed within the map.

5. The method of Claim 2, wherein the graphical map includes icons that represent modified web pages, and the method further comprises responding to user selection of an icon that represents a modified web page by displaying the modified web page.

6. The method of Claim 2, wherein generating and displaying the graphical map comprises using a layout algorithm to position graphical representations of nodes and links of the web site on a display screen.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of presenting modifications to a user comprises automatically sending to the user an email message which lists at least some of the modifications.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the steps of scanning the web site and the step of comparing the first and second data structures are performed automatically according to a pre-specified schedule.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the steps of scanning the web site comprise
5 storing attributes which indicate dates and times of last modification of content objects of the web site, and the step of comparing the first and second data structures comprises comparing the attributes of like content objects to identify content objects that have been modified.

10. A computer-implemented method for facilitating the analysis of a web site,
10 comprising:

comparing the web site at a first point in time to the web site at a second point in time to identify modifications made to the web site between the first and second points in time; and

generating a graphical map of the web site in which at least some of the
15 modifications to the web site are highlighted.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein generating the graphical map comprises displaying at least one of the following types of objects in a distinct color: new nodes, new links, modified nodes, deleted nodes, and deleted links.

12. The method of Claim 10, wherein generating the graphical map comprises
20 highlighting at least the following types of objects: new nodes, new links, modified nodes, deleted nodes, and deleted links.

13. The method of Claim 10, wherein generating the graphical map comprises presenting a user an option to specify types of modifications to be displayed within the map.

14. The method of Claim 10, wherein the graphical map includes icons that
25 represent modified web pages, and the method further comprises responding to user selection of an icon that represents a modified web page by displaying the modified web page.

15. The method of Claim 10, wherein generating the graphical map comprises using a layout algorithm to position graphical representations of nodes and links of the web site on a display screen.

16. The method of Claim 10, wherein comparing the web site comprises automatically scanning the web site according to a pre-specified schedule.

17. The method of Claim 16, further comprising sending an email message to a pre-specified address to notify a user of results of an automated scanning and comparison event.

18. The method of Claim 10, wherein comparing the web site comprises scanning the web site to generate a current representation of the web site, and comparing the current representation to a prior representation on a node-by-node and link-by-link basis to identify the modifications.

19. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a computer program, the computer program comprising:

a scanning module which scans a web site to generate a representation of the web site, the representation specifying at least an arrangement of nodes and links of the web site; and

a comparison module which compares representations of the web site generated by the scanning module at different times to identify modifications made to the web site.

20. The computer readable medium as in Claim 19, wherein the comparison module automatically identifies at least the following types of modifications: new nodes, new links, modified nodes, deleted nodes, and deleted links.

21. The computer readable medium as in Claim 19, wherein the comparison module uses content object attributes that indicate dates and times of last modification to automatically identify nodes that have been modified.

22. The computer readable medium as in Claim 19, wherein the scanning and comparison modules operate according to a predefined schedule to automatically scan and identify changes to the web site.

23. The computer readable medium as in Claim 22, wherein the comparison module automatically sends an email message to a pre-specified address to notify a user of an automated scanning and comparison event.

24. The computer readable medium as in Claim 19, further comprising a mapping module which generates a graphical site map in which at least some of the modifications are highlighted.

5 25. The computer readable medium as in Claim 24, wherein the mapping module presents a user an option to specify types of modifications to be displayed within the site map.

10 26. The computer readable medium as in Claim 19, wherein the mapping module presents the user an option to display or conceal each of the following types of objects within the site map: new nodes, modified nodes, deleted nodes, unmodified nodes, new links, deleted links, and unmodified links.

27. The computer readable medium as in Claim 19, wherein the mapping module implements a layout algorithm to position graphical representations of nodes and links on a display screen according to an organizational structure of the web site.

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